

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DACCA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8492
INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DACCA 1645

CINCIAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, BG
SUBJECT: JAGODAL OFF TO A SLOW START

REFS: A. DACCA 787; B. DACCA 821; C. DACCA 1094

1. IN THE NEARLY ONE MONTH SINCE THE JATIYABADI GANO-TANTRIC DAL (JAGODAL) RECEIVED ITS CLEARANCE TO OPERATE AS A POLITICAL PARTY FROM THE BDG IT HAS MADE SINGULARLY LITTLE PROGRESS IN RECRUITING EITHER SEASONED POLITICIANS OR RANK AND FILE TO ITS BANNER.

2. ADVISOR (I.E. MINISTERIAL) LEVEL MEMBERS OF THE CONVENING COMMITTEE HAVE CONTINUED TO SPEECHIFY IN DACCA AND IN THE MOFUSSIL AND TO HAVE THEIR ORATIONS REPORTED RATHER PROMINENTLY IN THE GOVERNMENT CONTROLLED PRESS, LESS SO IN THE INDEPENDENT PAPERS. HOWEVER, ALL REPORTS WE HAVE RECEIVED INDICATE THAT THEIR PERSUASIVE POWERS HAVE BEEN
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AS LIMITED AS IS THEIR POLITICAL EXPERIENCE. WORKING ITS WAY NOW THROUGH THE COURT SYSTEM IS A WRIT PETITION ASKING THAT ADVISORS TO THE PRESIDENT BE BARRED FROM TAKING PART IN A POLITICAL PARTY AS THEY ARE HOLDERS OF OFFICES OF PROFIT (A DISTINCTION IS TO BE MADE, SO THE PETITION STATES, BETWEEN MINISTERS WHO ARE ELECTED TO PARLIAMENT AND ADVISORS WHO ARE APPOINTED BY THE PRESIDENT.) SEVERAL LAWYERS TELL US

THAT THE PETITION WILL NOT BE ALLOWED BUT IT HAS PUT A TEMPORARY CRIMP IN THE CONVENING COMMITTEE'S ACTIVITIES. ANOTHER OBJECTION, NOT YET AT EH COURT LEVEL, IS THAT THE ADVISORS ARE VIOLATING THE BAN ON OUTDOOR POLITICKING WHICH APPLIES TO OTHER APPROVED PARTIES.

3. IN ADDITION TO THE LACKLUST PERFORMANCE OF THE ADVISORS AND THEIR ASSOCIATES, THERE HAS BEEN NO OVERT SUPPORT OF THE PARTY FROM PRESIDENT ZIA. HE IS BARRED FROM MEMBERSHIP AND FULLY PARTY ACTIVITY AS HE DOES CLEARLY HOLD AN OFFICE OF PROFIT AS AN ARMY OFFICER, BUT THE PUBLIC HAS EXPECTED TO SEE SOME GESTURES TOWARD JAGODAL SHORT OF VIOLATING THE LAW. THIS ABSENCE HAS LED TO SPECULATION THAT ZIA IS EITHER DISENCHANTED BY THE POLITICAL NAIVETE OF THE CONVENORS OR SEES JAGODAL AS BUT ONE OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES HE HOPES TO BRING INTO A FRONT WHICH WILL SUPPORT HIM FOR THE PRESIDENCY. WHOLE THE FIRST MAY RESULT FROM GOOD POLITICAL VISION BY ZIA, THE SECOND, THE CREATION OF A FRONT, HAS ITS PROBLEMS AS SO FAR NO PARTY OTHER THAN JAGODAL HAS PLUMPED FOR A PRESIDENTIAL SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT ON EITHER THE FRENCH OR AMERICAN LINES. THERE SEEMS LITTLE DOUBT THAT ZIA PERCEIVES HIMSELF AS A WORKING PRESIDENT IN WHOSE HANDS THE BULK OF THE EXECUTIVE POWER IS CONCENTRATED. FOR THIS HE WOULD LIKE TO HAVE THE BACKING OF THE COUNTRY IN AN ELECTION.

4. THE JAGODAL CONVENING COMMITTEE WAS EXPANDED ON MARCH 15
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TO INCLUDE A MEMBER OF PERSONS WHO ARE NOT ASSOCIATED WITH THE COUNCIL OF ADVISORS, BUT FEW OF THE NEW MEMBERS HAVE POLITICAL EXPERIENCE AND MANY ARE ALL BUT UNKNOWN. ALSO SEVERAL HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH FAR LEFT GROUPS, E.G., MIRZA GOLAM HAFIZ WHO IS PRESIDENT OF THE BANGLADESH-CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY, AND SHAMSUL HUDA, A FORMER VICE PRESIDENT OF THE BHASHANI NAP. THESE MADE A STRANGE COMBINATION WITH MODERATE CONSERVATIVES ALREADY IN JAGODAL SUCH AS COMMERCE ADVISOR SAIFUR RAHMAN AND DACCA MAYOR ABUL HASNAT, ALTHOUGH THEY DO FIT WITH SUCH AS LAND ADVISOR ENAYETULLAH KHAN.

5. JAGODAL THUS AT THIS TIME IS LOOKED UPON AS A COTERIE LOOKING FROM CLEAR PRESIDENTIAL SUPPORT (RATHER THAN THE OTHER WAY AROUND) BUT WHICH HAS CAPTURED LITTLE FOLLOWING AND WHICH IS A HETEROGENEOUS CONGLOMERATION OF POLITICAL VIEWS WHICH ARE OFTEN MUTUALLY ANTAGONISTIC.
BERGESEN

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